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ABSTRACT

Three major topics are covered in this newsletter. The first describes the progress of a committee studying the renovation of the Associate in Arts Degree. Elements of a good two-year degree program are listed, followed by suggestions of reports the committee may find helpful in accomplishing its goals. The second topic concerns the General College Retention Program developed to encourage academic improvement in three groups of students: Blacks, American Indians, and Chicanos/Latinos. Three Pilot Education Packages (PEP) are described, each a three-quarter, integrated, interdisciplinary set of modules of skills development, subject matter courses, career planning, and counseling. The gradual integration of PEP students into the general student body and special problems of the monolingual Chicanos/Latinos are discussed. Some early observations are presented which indicate PEP is accomplishing its retention goals. A discussion of the future of the program includes the need for more minority-group staff members, increased attention to career planning, and PEP's to reach other high-risk student groups. PEP schedules and course descriptions are included. The third topic, Evaluation of General College, considers a plan for a self-study total assessment of the General College. (NRB)

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norman w. moen, editor pro tem
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RENOVATION OF THE A.A. DEGREE PROGRAM
THE GENERAL COLLEGE RETENTION (PEP) PROGRAM
EVALUATION OF GENERAL COLLEGE

> The (General) College was founded on a mission that has distinguished it nationally. However, as enrollment pressures mount, it may be easy to lose sight of this unique role . . .
> - Rationale prepared in Morrill Hall to accompany the General College Budget for 1980-1981.

Renovation of the Associate in Arts Degree Program: A few members of the University community can well be excused for suggesting that General College may be focussing too heavily upon our baccalaureate degrees, because launching the program has demanded much attention, and accounts of its development dominate reports submitted to central administration in recent years. But the faculty is keenly aware that the bulk of its business continues to be in the two-year program. With baccalaureate operations well launched, it is giving renewed attention to the associate in arts.

Goal I, and a first priority objective associated with it in Planning for the 1980s in General College, read as follows:

> Goal I: In response to the changing needs of students in the 1980s we will further develop and improve curricula and techniques of instruction, with particular emphasis upon entry-level education.
>
> Goal I Objective D: To continue developing programs that combine basic skills courses, subject-area courses, and counseling services which provide better integrated learning experiences and enhance skills and knowledge retention.

One of the ways the college curriculum committee has been working toward the goal, and the objective - in the light of counsel from Morrill Hall - has been to appoint a sub-group, chaired by Allen Johnson, to study ways of renovating the associate in arts degree program.

The Johnson committee began by considering such basic concerns as

...how can the degree be made to attract more candidates?
...should there be more than one 2-year degree?
...should minimum and maximum credit limits be set?
...what minimum competence/performance standards are appropriate for a 2-year degree granted by a university?
...what are the essential general components of a good 2-year degree program?
...how can we help students plan a good A.A. program? GC 1894 model?

As it addressed these concerns, committee members had before them a goal of establishing for the associate in arts program the kind of rational, coherent structure "Guidelines for General College Baccalaureate Degrees" gives our 4-year program.

Eventually, the committee agreed that the essential elements of a good 2-year degree program include the following:

...Preparatory: provide appropriate study skills training; prepare for transfer; opportunities for career exploration

...Integrative, Interdisciplinary: package and mini-package courses; core courses; skills training in combination with subject matter classes; coursework integrated with counseling and/or experiential learning

...Student Centered: adaptible to each student's individual situation

...Diagnostic: educational strengths, weaknesses, interests determined

...Experimental: emphasis upon research in effective organization, teaching, counseling

...Accountable: continuous evaluation and adjustments made in light of findings

...Standards, Competence: what minimums should be set in light of student characteristics

...Coherence: program should have logic, sequence, sensible to students and faculty; integrated course work

...Learning How to Learn: goal-setting, discipline, sense of academic competence; appetite for continuing to learn; life-long learning, career planning

The committee wishes to consult faculty opinion before continuing its work. It will soon distribute a questionnaire inviting responses to queries and statements, such as the following:

Does the present Associate in Arts degree have any value?

The degree should be awarded only to candidates who attain specified levels of competence in reading, writing, and mathematics.

Degree programs should include work in package/integrated courses because candidates should be exposed to the interdisciplinary nature of knowledge.

Each degree program should include systematic exploration of available education/career options.

Successful completion of a comprehensive examination should be a degree requirement.

A number of different modes of satisfying degree requirements should be available to candidates: distribution of credits; grades; comprehensive examination, special projects.

The College should establish an honors program.

The 2-year degree program should stress continued formal education, and life-long learning.

The College should offer more than one 2-year degree.

The present entrance comprehensive examination (General College Placement Program) is useful to students and advisers as a planning device.

Responses to these issues or propositions, and reactions to the essential elements listed in the preceding paragraph, will give the committee valuable material for future deliberations.

The work on renovating the associate in arts program is in a very early stage. Discussions of the nature of general education apparently are yet to come. As these approach, the committee might find it illuminating to study the origins of the general education movement (Columbia, University of Chicago, Harvard), and to visit institutions outstanding for integrated undergraduate programs (e.g., Boston University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Hampshire College, University of Redlands, University of California: Santa Cruz).

Its members also might find it instructive to read the Report of the College of Liberal Arts Committee on Undergraduate Education issued in January, 1980. For example, this committee, under the chairmanship of Professor Clarke A. Chambers, Department of History, has this to say about distributions requirements:

> The (distribution) requirements are designed to ensure that students become exposed to a certain breadth of intellectual experience, that they develop a perspective on themselves and their fellow human beings around the world, and that they develop certain basic cognitive skills that will help them think for themselves and communicate their thoughts to others...
>
> We...propose a critical review by departments and College committees of the courses that meet certain requirements, as a means of encouraging instructional reform...we have therefore decided to recommend that new limitations be imposed on the nature and number of courses eligible to fulfill requirements and that the courses proposed for such purposes be subject to special review. It is our belief that in the past - as well as in some of the reforms that have recently been given publicity on other campuses - too much faith has been placed in simply requiring a new set of courses or in devising a rigid core curriculum. Our basic concern...(has been to set up a process) whereby the faculty's creativity will be brought to bear on devising ways to orient students to the theories and methods and to the basic content of the several disciplines. It is our hope and expectation that most of the time and effort of the proposed review will be devoted to the development of new modes of presentation and new modes of interaction between faculty and students and students among students. Our goals are to sharpen critical thinking, to enlarge esthetic appreciation, and to promote learning experiences that transcend the mere learning of facts, methods, and theories...
>
> The Committee came to be convinced that we needed to find means to have our students' curricula transcend the boundaries traditionally set by the major European and North American traditions. The Committee recognized the wide cultural diversity that characterizes societies within which human experience, behavior, thought, and expression take place. The study of other parts of the world rests on many grounds: on practical terms of economic interest or military strategy; on intellectual arguments that seek to expand the esthetic universe or the range of the social scientist's analysis, or along the more subjective line that one knows one's self by knowing others. Conversely, ignoring the rest of the world cannot be so justified. The world is there. Ignorance of it is at odds with the spirit of liberal education...
>
> Both in hearings held prior to the presentation of the Interim Report and in discussions following, the Committee found widespread support

for the proposition that students who seek a B.A. degree should have had an integrative educational experience. This approval is undoubtedly explained by the fact that liberal education is generally understood as integrative in nature. Liberal education "integrates learning in ways that cultivate the students' broad understanding and ability to think about a large and complex subject," in the words of the Carnegie Report; it "provides a context of values that gives meaning and resonance to more narrow academic pursuits," and "fosters the organic development of the individual," as others have written. We have come to recognize that the broad and complex problems confronting contemporary society require adaptability - the ability to draw on and relate methods and advances in many disciplines. Both faculty and students expressed their uneasiness that the opportunity to synthesize work done in different courses is generally missing...

The Committee has discussed among ourselves and with visitors the desirability of adding an integrative learning requirement for the B.A. Such a requirement would ideally be fulfilled in the junior or senior year, for students in the first two years are often lacking in skills and knowledge that are essential to a "pulling together." Furthermore, students would benefit from relating specialized work in the major areas to other advanced courses. If done at upper division levels, as the Committee believes it should be, the intellectual focus of the work would be compatible with the research interests of faculty and at the same time be valuable to undergraduates.

As a postcript to this CLA report on the general/liberal education component of undergraduate education in that college, it might be interesting to our faculty to read what CLA is doing to establish a flexible baccalaureate degree program in that college. The following excerpts are from Comment (Number 44, April, 1980), the publication of the University's Center for Educational Development.

The newest flexible degree is CLA's Bachelor of Individualized Studies (BIS), introduced in fall 1978 for a trial period to extend five years or until 500 students have graduated from the program. BIS enables students to develop individualized programs incorporating a greater number of credits taken outside CLA than the traditional bachelor's degrees offered through the college; thirty non-CLA credits may be applied toward the 180 required for graduation, in contrast to the sixteen credits allowed for the bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, and bachelor of fine arts. Liberal education distribution requirements for the BIS are somewhat more extensive than those for the B.A., B.S., and B.F.A.

The BIS was introduced after CLA discontinued an earlier experimental degree, the Bachelor of Elected Studies which enabled students to

design their own programs primarily within the college, independent of traditional graduation requirements. Some 444 students earned the BES between 1971 and 1975. (BES and the nontraditional degree programs of General College and University College were described in detail in Comment Number 16, February 1974.)

Students applying to BIS must present a statement of their educational goals and a general plan of the work they will do to meet them. The student's objectives must be well thought out and clearly stated, and the planned work must constitute an interdisciplinary program that cannot be pursued through any regular degree program of CLA.

Once admitted, the student receives intensive advising both from staff advisers shared with IDIM and from participating faculty advisers. With this help the student develops a detailed degree plan that must be approved by two faculty advisers.

Student plans may focus on a single unifying theme or may simply combine concentrations of work in several unrelated areas. "The BIS student typically believes in and wants a liberal arts education," said Michael Root, director of the Cross-Disciplinary Studies Program in which BIS is housed, "but wants to combine liberal studies with other, usually more career-oriented courses."

Most of the 133 students admitted to date have expressed satisfaction with the flexibility allowed by the degree and with the advising and support they receive.

* * *

The General College Retention (PEP) Program: The number of aliens admitted to the United States has tripled in four years, rising from 32,000 in 1977 to a projected 234,200 in fiscal 1980. The total influx over this same period comes to approximately 435,000. Most are refugees - U.S. supporters evacuated after our defeat in Indo-China; Vietnamese boat people; Jewish dissidents from Russia; Cambodians. The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service estimates that the number of Cubans settling here in the past twenty years will reach one million by 1981. American higher education will be called upon to play an important part in helping significant numbers of these people find a better life in their new country than they experienced in the ones from which they come. The dimensions of the adjustment confronting them are formidable. Gaining control of English as a second language is a special barrier to newcomers hoping to complete courses of study in American colleges and universities.

That many of those already in the nation's college classrooms face the same barrier is now a matter of national concern. Time reports on one aspect of the situation:

> In the age of talk shows, tape recorders, telephonitis and declining educational standards, the clearly written word is swiftly becoming a lost art. The many new courses attempting to correct that drift are not concerned with "creative" writing but with something almost as rare: clear, usable, everyday prose. (May 19, 1980, p. 88)

The account goes on to describe the University of Iowa Institute on Writing, and new writing programs at such institutions as Carleton, Dartmouth, Hollins, Air Force Academy, University of Texas: Austin, Duke, as well as such businesses as RCA, E. F. Hutton, AT&T, AMOCO, and Standard Oil of Indiana.

The Retention Program is designed to help students overcome language, writing, and other deficiencies which lead to discouragement and failure in college work. It is administered by Professor Candido Pietro Zanoni, Jr., who describes it in these excerpts from a preliminary report issued on April 10, 1980:

> Introduction
>
> The 1979 session of the Minnesota Legislature appropriated a special fund to the University of Minnesota for a two-year program of student retention - that is for the University to use in devising incentives to encourage students to continue their educations instead of dropping out after a brief period of schooling. The target groups for this legislative special were so-called "high-risk" students - especially representatives of minority groups from traditionally "non-academic" populations. This report deals with the General College's contribution to the University's effort at student retention during the 1979-80 academic year.
>
> In summer, 1979, the General College applied to the University of Minnesota central administration for funds to mount a retention program for four groups of students. The College's application was only partially successful. In late summer, 1979, the University central administration allotted the General College $52,700 for the purpose of planning and developing a retention program for two groups: entry-level American Indians and entry-level Chicano/Latinos. These funds constituted the University's allocation for the first year of the General

College's 1979-81 retention program. Since the allocation was made late in the summer of 1979, the College began immediate planning with the intention of having a working program ready for students arriving in fall quarter, 1979.

In the process of designing the General College's retention program, it became evident that a feature of the original plan - a component serving Black students - was desirable. Accordingly, the General College channelled whatever resources were available from its own budget into the retention program in order to extend it beyond that which was supported by University funds. With this additional money, it was possible to plan a program for three groups - American Indians, Chicano/Latinos, and Blacks. For each of these groups of students, the College mounted a Pilot Education Program (PEP) comprising three parallel but distinct Pilot Education Packages.[1]

In accepting University funds for a new, untried program (and in expening its own slim resources for an experimental effort) the General College assumed an obligation to account accurately for the manner in which the money was spent and to demonstrate that such expenditures were in accordance with the University's (and the Legislature's) general understanding of the purposes and objectives of a student retention program. At the same time, it was recognized that a careful record of costs and a well-designed system of evaluation of methodology and outcomes were essential to the eventual full report that would be necessary at the completion of the first year of the program.

Program Description

The General College's retention program is founded on the premise that providing means of encouraging academic improvement will result in the long-range retention of those students who, by traditional measures, would ordinarily be expected to fail or drop out of the University. These are the so-called "high-risk" students; in the past they have often come from groups that comprise ethnic and racial minorities in the society at large. The basic educational structure designed for these students in the General College retention program is the Pilot Education Packages (PEP).

The PEP package for each of the three groups of students - American Indian, Chicano/Latino, and Black - consists of components specifically designed to be relevant to the characteristics of the students enrolled. Each is a three-quarter (full academic year), integrated, interdisciplinary set of modules consisting of skills development courses (reading, writing, speaking, mathematics); subject-matter courses focusing tutorial assistance and "survival" information (economic, social, and educational); career-planning sessions; and individual advising and counseling.

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[1]For convenience in this report, the acronym "PEP" is used with both "program" and "package." The "PEP Program" is the total General College retention program; "PEP package" refers to the individual parts - for each of the minority groups - that comprise the whole program. "PEP I" designates the package for American Indians; "PEP II" refers to both parts (bilingual and monolingual) of the Chicano/Latino package; and "PEP III" denotes the package for Black students.

Built into the design of the General College retention program was a deliberate "sheltering" of each group of PEP students, not only from each other but also from the University student body in general. That is, for the first two quarters of the academic year, each PEP group did all of its course work separately. The gradual integration of PEP students into the general student body began during the third quarter of the academic year. In every instance in which it was possible, qualified ethnic-group instructors, counselors, and peer advisers were recruited for each of the functions in each of the PEP package modules. Members of the University's Consolidated HELP Center staff participated in various ways as advisers and counselors to students enrolled in the PEP program. Directors of the University's Learning Resource Centers were consulted frequently and kept informed of the development and progress of the program. At this stage of the program's development, it is already clear that minority and ethnic instructors for the PEP packages are imperative and that more of them will be necessary for next year's program. An effort is already made to contact some who might be available.[2]

Of the three PEP packages comprising the retention program, the two for American Indians and Blacks were most readily planned, staffed and implemented. The Chicano/Latino package, however, presented special difficulties. Since the planners of the Chicano/Latino package did not know in advance that some of the students recruited for it were monolingual, a problem arose at the outset. As the program began in the fall of 1979, the College was confronted with somewhat different educational needs: some bilingual (Spanish/English) speakers and some monolingual (Spanish-speaking only) students. Since provision had originally been made only for bilingual Chicano-/Latino students, a second Chicano/Latino PEP package had to be hastily designed and implemented to meet the special needs of the monolingual Chicano/Latino students. Special instructors, tutors, and peer advisers had to be recruited and trained. The total cost of the Chicano/Latino package was thus increased beyond what had been originally allocated for that part of the total program.[3]

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[2]During 1979-80, Professor Hinojosa-Smith, Chairman of the Department of Chicano Studies, graciously consented to supervise the fall-quarter offering to Migrants in Minnesota. In winter quarter, 1980, the course, Chicano History: An Historical Survey, was supervised by Professor Arturo Madrid, Associate Dean and Executive Officer of the College of Liberal Arts. The course instructor was Paul Carrizales, Instructor/Counselor in the Reading Skills Center of the Office of Student Affairs. In addition, the Arts, Communication, and Philosophy (ACP) Division of the General College is presently negotiating with Ms. Flo Wiger of the Office of Minority and Special Student Affairs to teach in the American Indian package during the 1980-81 academic year.

[3]Among PEP program staff members there is some concern about the recruitment of monolingual students for the program by the University of Minnesota Office of Minority and Special Student Affairs (OMSSA). PEP staff members have, for instance, made the following points about this practice:

Program Evaluation

A definitive evaluation of the General College retention program obviously cannot be made on the basis of data from one quarter of operation. A full report of the program would include an evaluation of each courses in each individual PEP package and an assessment of the program's effectiveness in terms of student retention over a period of time. Such a report will be initiated at the conclusion of the first year of the program's operation - that is, at the end of the spring quarter, 1980.

Even at this point in the development of the retention program, however, some observations may be made about its effectiveness. There is, for instance, reason to believe that the PEP package concept is an effective instructional mode for the General College retention program. There is also evidence that the instruments devised to measure the program's effectiveness thus far will be adequate to assess the impact of the total 1979-80 program on student retention.

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[3](continued)

--The costs of a PEP package for monolingual Chicano-Latinos, in addition to a package for bilingual Chicano/Latinos, impose an unduly heavy drain on the General College retention budget for one segment of the student population.

--Since some of the monolingual students recruited for PEP in 1979-80 had not had previous educational training equivalent to that of American high schools, the need for remedial instruction for them has been extensive.

--Since the monolingual Chicano/Latinos' previous English-language training has been minimal, they were not adequately prepared for the college-level English as a Second Language (ESL) program. (Eligibility for admission to ESL requires a minimum score of 45 on the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency.)

--Since monolingual Chicano/Latino students are extremely "high-risk" students - much more so than others recruited for the General College retention program - it can be said (and indeed it is being said) that OMSSA's recruitment of such students is an instance of recruiting for failure rather than recruiting for success.

The program's fall quarter, 1979, evaluation effort was centered on two aspects of the program.[4]

1. Demographic profile of students enrolled in the PEP program. In order to focus the retention program on the special needs of students in the individual PEP packages, information on the characteristics of these students was accumulated: academic histories, cultural and social backgrounds, the level of study skills and academic motivation, and other self-reporting concerns. (Perhaps no single group of students in the history of the General College has been so minutely examined and monitored.) Demographic information of this kind will assist PEP program planners in determining what types of students profit most from the program, what kinds of students should be recruited in the future, and how the program can be modified to serve these and future students.

2. PEP students as evaluated by traditional measures of academic success. In a preliminary evaluation of the success rate of the PEP packages at the end of the fall quarter, such indicators as grade-point averages, ratio of credits completed to those attempted, and the retention rate of students in the program from fall quarter, 1979, to winter quarter, 1980, were examined.

The evaluation instruments employed for this preliminary report will, in all likelihood, be the indicators used in the more extensive evaluation of the General College retention program at the end of the academic year. In the meantime, PEP staff members believe that the appended evaluation verifies the efficacy of their efforts thus far and that, based on results up to this point, the program can be declared a success. Of particular note, for instance, are such summary details as the following:

Retention Rate: Fall, 1979, to Winter, 1980	
PEP I (American Indian)	92% retention
PEP II (Chicano/Latino)	98% retention
PEP III (black)	94% retention

Conclusions and Recommendations

Even at this preliminary stage, there is a convergence of evidence - this report, verbal reports and other formal and informal sources - that supports the conclusion that the General College academic retention program is accomplishing the retention goals envisaged for it by the College and by the University. Of course, like all new experimental efforts, the planning and implementing of the PEP program was not without occasional glitches, snafus, and foul-ups. Nevertheless, the planners of PEP are convinced that the aim of encouraging students to continue their studies in the University can be achieved by an educational model like the PEP program. Viewed at this point, the program seems to be working: the administrative machinery is functioning smoothly, and the individual PEP package staff members are beginning to meld into cohesive and effective teaching teams.

[4]The evaluation is being conducted by Professor John Romano, General College Division of Counseling and Student Development, and his assistant, Joan Garfield.

With respect to future needs of the program, some points have already been mentioned. The pressing need for more ethnic and minority-group staff members, for instance, was noted above. At this point, it is impossible to predict how many of the 1979-80 staff and consultants will be available to 1980-81.

On the basis of experience with PEP students thus far, it is clear that one part of the PEP program that will require increased attention and commitment is the career-planning module in each of the packages. PEP staff members report that too many PEP students have unrealistic career expectations. Accordingly, staff members recommend that the career-planning seminars be extended in scope and that attendance be required for all PEP students. To follow this recommendation would, of course, require an increase in funds from some source. The General College administration has pointed out that the College itself cannot afford increased expenditures for the PEP program without jeopardizing its primary commitment to the majority of its students in its other programs.

There is another consideration that grows ineluctably from the College's experience with PEP this year. Within the University there is a large segment of the student body whose retention probabilities could be significantly improved by the kind of academic assistance provided by the General College PEP program. There is, for example, the increasingly large number of Asian/Pacific students for whom a separate PEP package is desperately needed. Such a view has been expressed by Dr. Nobuya Tsuchida, Director of the University's Asian/Pacific American Learning Center.[5]

Another category of retention concern in the University is the growing number of foreign/international students who might advantageously avail themselves of instruction, not through the PEP program, but through the General College's Commanding English program.[6] Dr. Tsuchida and Mark Landa, Coordinator of the English Program for International Students, agree that there is a large number of foreign/international students in the University who could profit, either from enrolling in the Commanding English program, or from using parts of the program as a supplement to their work in ESL.

To summarize, there is little doubt that there are many students in the University for whom effective retention aid is required. The plight of these students ought to be a matter of serious concern to the central administration of the University.

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[5]At the time of this writing, Dr. Tsuchida and Professor Sandra Dylla, Coordinator of the ACP Division's Commanding English program, have submitted an Educational Developmental Program (EDP) grant proposal for the funding of such a PEP package.

[6]This year the General College's Commanding English program for foreign/international students was funded by an EDP grant. Since such a program is quite expensive, it is doubtful that the College itself could assume the fiscal burden of this program in the future.

PEP Schedule: Fall, 1979
Required Courses

PEP I (American Indian):

1405	(3 cr)	Communication Skills: Fundamentals of Usage and Style
or		
1421	(4 cr)	Writing Laboratory: Personal Writing
1708	(2 cr)	Support Seminar
1831	(4 cr)	Special Topics: Chemical Dependency

PEP II (Monolingual Chicano/Latino):

1278	(3 cr)	Special Topics: Migrants in Minnesota
1409	(4 cr)	Individual Study: Grammar
1429	(3 cr)	Individual Study: Speech
1708	(2 cr)	Support Seminar

Pep II (Bilingual Chicano/Latino):

1278	(3 cr)	Special Topics: Migrants in Minnesota
1401	(3 cr)	Communication Skills: Vocabulary Development
1402	(3 cr)	Communication Skills: Reading, Comprehension and Study Skills
1403	(1 cr)	Improving Spelling and Punctuation
1404	(1 cr)	Writing Grammatical Sentences and Developing Organized Paragraphs
1465	(3 cr)	Oral Communication: Interpersonal Communication
1708	(2 cr)	Support Seminar

PEP III (Black):

1405	(3 cr)	Communication Skills: Fundamentals of Usage and Style
or		
1421	(4 cr)	Writing Laboratory: Personal Writing
1461	(5 cr)	Oral Communication: Basic Principles
1708	(2 cr)	Support Seminar
1815	(5 cr)	The Afro-American Experience

Course Descriptions
(Special PEP Courses)

GC 1278 Special Topics: migrants in Minnesota

The course will provide an analysis of main issues involved in migratory farm-labor conditions. As a social issue, the areas of study to be covered are education, legislation and labor/employment. The need to relate academic knowledge to experiential knowledge is a prime concern. For this reason guest lectures and panels will be used in the class as primary resource people. Films and news coverage will be discussed.

GC 1708 Support Seminar

This course is designed to develop the basic academic skills of entering freshmen and provide information essential to their success as students on this campus. Through a combination of lectures, discussions, and classroom assignments, students will increase their retention of information from lectures and texts, improve their performance on exams and written assignments, learn to cope with standard University procedures, and obtain information on the campus and community resources available to support their efforts.

GC 1831 Special Topics: Chemical Dependency

This course will not be a conventional course dealing with drug abuse. What we hope to do is to look at the conventional literature on causes, effects, and treatment of chemical abuse to see if there are cultural values implicitly and explicitly assumed in this literature which may limit its applicability to specific population groups within American society, specifically American Indian individuals and families.

In order to look at the hypothesis contained in the above statement we will be looking at a number of Indian and non-Indian chemical dependency prevention and treatment programs in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. We will also be looking at basic cultural differences between Indians and non-Indians to ascertain to what extent these basic differences must be taken into consideration in the cause/treatment/effect questions revolving around chemical dependency.

* * *

Evaluation of General College: from Planning for the 1980's in General College, these words:

Goal VI: We will develop and begin to implement a plan for the total assessment of the General College.

Goal VI: Objective A: To develop a plan and schedule in 1980-1982 for systematic, regular review and assessment of the General College Degree programs, certificate programs, administration, and student services.

Goal VI: Objective F: To develop and implement a College-wide plan for the systematic evaluation of teaching, counseling, and advising in the College.

Goal VI: Objective C: To develop a profile of the General College faculty and staff including age distribution, type of appointment, and projected role in the College.

A subdivision of the Long Range Planning Committee has been considering implications of these statements. From some points of view, the scope of this goal and its related objectives is almost overwhelming. How should the faculty be advised to undertake review/assessment/evaluation of General College programs, teaching, counseling-advising, administration and research?

A logical first step appeared to be that of finding models. The subcommittee, chaired by Professor Norman W. Moen, learned from the June, 1979, report of SCEP (Senate Committee on Educational Policy) that here in the University of Minnesota 125 graduate programs have been/are being evaluated in a process which began in 1971 and which still is in progress. Although the focus has been upon graduate instruction, many undergraduate programs have been subjected to simultaneous, coordinated scrutiny.

The evaluated undergraduate progams include substantial portions of the College of Liberal Arts, and the College of Arts and Letters, Duluth. The following list indicates the scope of this activity:

American Studies
Anthropology
Architecture
Astrophysics
Chemical, Civil, Mineral Engineering
Chemistry
Communication, Communication Disorders
East Asian Studies
Economics
Education Foundations
English
Geography
Geology
German
History
Home Economics
Journalism
Library Science
Music Education
Middle Eastern, Islamic Studies
Nursing
Political Science
Psychology
Public Affairs
Recreation, Park Administration
Romance Languages
Scandinavian Languages
Sociology
South Asian Studies
Studio Arts
Theatre Arts
Zoology

When these evaluations began almost ten years ago there was no protocol to guide faculty through the process. As they progressed this pattern of reporting and assessment emerged:

History of the Unit
Self-Study
Internal Comparison (sister University of Minnesota program)
External Evaluation (visitation)
Cost Effectiveness Analysis
Cumulative Assessment
Department or Unit Response
Follow-up

General College and University of Minnesota: Morris were specifically exempted from this evaluation program at its inception, because their programs are exclusively undergraduate. However, the June 1979 SCEP report recommends that these two units be included when the University of Minnesota engages in a second round of assessments.

Still searching for guidance and models, the committee - at the suggestion of Professor Fredric R. Steinhauser - turned to the manuals of the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities. Chairman Moen prepared the extract/adaptation which follows:

NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION GUIDE FOR EVALUATING INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

I The Educational Task: Institutional Goals

What are they?
Are they appropriate for clientele served?
Are there divergencies about substance or priority among those concerned with the institution?
Does the institution command resources sufficient for carrying out its educational task? (faculty, facilities, budget)

II Clientele - Constituency

Whom does the institution serve? (student body characteristics)
Where is this clinetele found? (campus, community, adult learners, persons enrolled in other institutions)
To what extent do other institutions utilize this program?
What are recent, current, projected enrollment trends? Implications?

III Achievement

Is student achievement consistent with the institution's goals?
To what extent does each member of the faculty contribute to achieving institutional goals?
Is the institution well organized for carrying out its educational task? (contributions of instructional departments, student development services, central administration, supporting personnel)

IV Curriculum - Programs

Are the educational program, instructional techniques, and student services/policies appropriate expressions of institutional goals?
How do students evaluate the educational program, effectiveness of individual faculty members, and quality of student services?
What evidence is there that the educational program is flexible, innovative, current, and continually evaluated?
What curriculum trends can be traced from course offerings of the past decade? What curriculum developments/trends are anticipated/planned?
Do general environment and intellecual climate foster student learning and faculty growth?

V Faculty - Staff

What are salient characteristics of personnel who staff the enterprise? (include faculty profile)
Has the faculty changed in any significant way in recent years?
To what extent do faculty and supporting staff understand, support, and contribute to attainment of institutional goals?
What plans are there for faculty change, development, improvement?
Are institutional policies such as to promote high morale among instructional, administrative, and supporting personnel?
What is the nature of the reward system?
Are institutional personnel policies understood? Democratic?

VI Institutional Dynamics: Decision-Making and Planning

Does the organization of the institution promise maximum efficiency in attaining institutional goals?
Are administrative responsibilities clearly described, specifically assigned, and continuously evaluated?
Do all elements in this academic community have appropriate roles in decisions affecting them?
Are decision-making and planning processes congruent with institutional goals?
Is adequate attention given to continuous planning?

VII Resources

Are physical resources adequate? (library, laboratories, studies)
Is budgetary provision sufficient?
Do institutional personnel search for supplementary funding?
Are community resources utilized?
Are there potential resources which are available, but which institutional personnel fail to capitalize upon?

VIII Anticipated Developments

What problems confront the institution - limitations, anticipated difficulties?
What strategies are being designed to resolve these situations?
What strengths reinforce the institution as it confronts the future?

Source: NCACS Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, Handbook on Accreditation: Section I, revised edition. Chicago: NCACS, 1975.

Obviously, a lot of work lies ahead. Fortunately, the task of evaluation is lessened by the fact that the College has made a habit of studying its programs. Results of recent investigations could be incorporated in an all-college assessment program. Four examples reported in the following paragraphs are not described in detail, nor are outcomes stated in every case. For the purpose here is to remind ourselves that evaluation is indeed an on-going activity in our midst, and to illustrate several different techniques being employed.

Evaluation of the Human Services Generalist Program: This segment of General College, established in 1971, has been investigated so frequently in whole or in its parts, internally and externally, that an ad hoc committee chaired by then-Professor Thomas C. Buckley, analyzed results and presented a report of findings spring quarter, 1978.

The committee relies heavily upon a General College Research Center Technical Report, An Evaluation of the Human Services Generalist Program of the General College, University of Minnesota, and its addendum, Evaluation of the Core Program, issued in May-June 1975 by Graduate Research Assistant Steven F. Schomberg. These massive papers contain detailed and carefully documented evidence about:

Student Characteristics
Core Curriculum: Content and Effectiveness
Comparisons with Other HSG Programs
Identifying and Assessing Attainment of Important Skills, and
Assessment by Six External Evaluators
(Representing University of Minnesota School of Public Health; Minneapolis Public Schools; Minnesota State Department of Health; Community Involvement, Inc., Minneapolis; University Health Care Center, Minneapolis; and the ACP Division, General College)

Two excerpts from its final report of May 23, 1978, written by Professor Buckley summarize the purpose, procedures, and findings of the committee:

> ...the Ad Hoc Committee...represented a pioneering effort because it was the first all-college evaluation of an entire occupational program. Its charge was to
> 1. represent all divisions of the college and look toward their fuller participation in the program.
> 2. represent a number of interested committees such as Curriculum, Occupational Programs, and Baccalaureate Programs.
> 3. promote the parallel examination of parts of the HSG program by the Curriculum Committee and the SBS division, and
> 4. establish a pattern which might be followed in the all-college evaluation of other occupational programs.
>
> The committee was formed in the fall quarter of 1976 and began its deliberations in the winter quarter of 1977. From that time...it examined hundreds of pages of documentation and received numerous hours of testimony from division heads, GC teaching faculty, and interested members of the educational community about the HSG program and its potential for expansion. As a result of this effort it has concluded that:
>
> 1. the program addresses community needs;
> 2. the program prepares students who are judged competent on the job and have mastered a number of human services skills;
> 3. the program reflects the needs of students preparing for the new human services generalist profession;
> 4. the program succeeds in placing students in human services positions within a short period of time after they have completed their training; and
> 5. the program develops career skills widely sought by GC students. But few students have been served...because the core HSG staff has not been able to work with other GC faculty to extend attitudes, knowledge, and skills taught in the HSG program to other career programs in the college.

The committee report concluded by endorsing the program, and presenting six recommendations designed to have the effect of integrating it into the permanent curriculum of General College

Evaluation of the General College Retention Program: This aspect of current all-college concern is being evaluated in a broad undertaking supervised - as reported above - by Professors Romano and Garfield. Their complete and final report should be ready by midsummer, 1980. The abstract of a preliminary fall 1979 examination is presented here because it indicates the scope of the

inquiry. The completed document undoubtedly will reach the faculty in the guise of a technical report or an issue of General College Studies. The Romano-Garfield abstract, abridged by the editor, follows:

> This paper presents a preliminary evaluation of the General College (GC) Pilot Education Program (PEP). The evaluation focuses on fall quarter achievement and retention and student demographic characteristics. To aid in the understanding of the analysis, PEP students were compared to a group of non-white GC freshman students not in the PEP program and a group of GC freshmen enrolled in an introductory psychology class.
>
> The results showed that even though the PEP students entered GC with weaker academic histories compared to the other two groups, they were just as likely to remain in school fall quarter and register for classes winter quarter. In addition, they achieved at a higher grade-point average (GPA) level. The psychology group completed a higher percentage of credits than the PEP students, but the PEP students completed more credits than the non-PEP minority group. Student needs and demographic characteristics tended to be different among the three groups with the difference between the PEP and psychology students being most pronounced. Standardized inventories of study skills, problem areas, and academic motivations showed few differences among the three groups.
>
> The final evaluation of the 1979-80 PEP program will focus on academic achievements of the students during winter and spring quarters, 1980, and will begin to identify those variables most likely to increase students' academic success in the General College.

Evaluation Design

In order to compare PEP students' academic progress and characteristics with those of other GC students, two control groups were used. The first, referred to as "non-PEP control," consisted of GC non-white freshman students, many of whom received financial assistance through the Office of Minority and Special Student Affairs (OMSSA). Generally, these students did not select the PEP program at fall registration because their prior academic history suggested they were not academically underprepared in comparison to the PEP students. The second control group, referred to as "psychology class control," consisted of all freshmen enrolled in a section of a General College introductory psychology course. It was hypothesized that this group would closely resemble the typical GC freshman student. The two control groups, as well as the PEP students, were identified at the beginning of fall, 1979.

Surveys and Data Collection

Data were collected in several ways. During freshman orientation, all students who attended orientation completed the General College Entrance Comprehensive Examination, consisting of a verbal and a math component. Results on this test are used by GC advisers to help students select appropriate courses. Students also completed the Academic Motivations Inventory (AMI), a self-report instrument to assess students' motivations for attending college. Finally, during orientation, the students completed

a personal survey which asked for demographic information about the students and their family backgrounds, as well as about the needs and concerns of the students as they began college. The information collected during orientation was gathered and summarized for the PEP students and the two control groups. Other demographic information and student high school percentile ranks were collected from the student personnel files. These data originate in the University Admissions and Records Office.

At the beginning of fall quarter, 1979, students in the PEP program and the psychology class control group were asked to complete the Brown-Holtzman Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes and the Mooney Problem Checklist. These two instruments were administered again at the end of the quarter and used to assess student change in study habits and attitudes and to indicate types of problems that students were concerned about at the beginning and the end of the fall quarter. These instruments were also used by some of the faculty advisers in their counseling and advising of PEP students.

At the end of fall, 1979, the most recent grade reports for students in PEP and the two control groups were examined. Grade information was collected from these reports to assess grade-point average (GPA) and credit-completion ratio (CCR) levels. The GPA waa calculated on a scale of A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, and D = 1. Symbols other than these grades (e.g., I, N, W, etc.) did not affect GPA. The CCR was calculated by dividing all credits earned for the quarter by all those attempted. Only students who withdrew officially (all W's or a withdrawal notation on fall transcripts) were considered as withdrawals from the College and University during the fall quarter. Registration for winter quarter, 1980, was assessed during the third week of winter quarter by checking for a completed registration card in the GC Registration Center.

The Paralegal Program: Evaluation of the Retention Program is an in-house operation. Evaluation of the Paralegal Program is a function of a national professional organization. The American Bar Association's Education Committee sponsors biennial assessment and certification of all programs for training legal paraprofessionals in the U.S. Professor Roger Larson has been consultant to the A.B.A.E.C for a number of years. He has assisted in establishing criteria and reporting, visitation, and verification policies. Dr. Larson frequently is called upon to visit paraprofessional education programs in all parts of the country.

The Genral College Paralegal Program recently completed the required report and self-study. The on-site professional evaluation visitation is scheduled for S'80. The biennial evaluation reports form an objective and documented history of the evolution of this splendid program.

Co-Op Education Program: The General College sponsors experiential learning in three different fields: HSG - social services; Urban Internship - community affairs, government, politics; and Co-Op Education - field experience in business.

The latter program was evaluated last year by a team of external visitors composed as follows:

> Professor Robert E. Stake, University of Illinois Champagne
> evaluation specialist and team leader
> Bernard J. Raphael, Normandale Community College, Bloomington
> nationally known specialist in co-operative education
> Charee Watters, Eastside Neighborhood Services, Minneapolis
> specialist in business and personnel administration

Professors Patrick Kroll and George Lindall, program director and supervisor, respectively, were asked to prepare for the visitation by thinking of responses to what were called "Evaluation Foreshadowing Questions." The method adopted by the team was described by Professor Stake in these words:

> Our method will be one of using the eyes of those who regularly see the program in its work. We do not see ourselves as scientists discovering truths that others cannot see, but as experts in organizing and interpreting the truths that others are seeing. Through conversations, interviews and meetings we will record what others have seen. We will organize these observations around issues and present a summary to our readers. Some of the issues will grow out of the...foreshadowing questions. Others will emerge form our on-site inquiries.

The team followed this interesting plan by interviewing students, employers, company officers, faculty, counselors, and college administrators. Its report promises to make an already good program even better.

Both the technique and the findings of these and other recent evaluations will be useful when the College confronts the task of assessing its entire operations. But much more spade work needs to be done. The Long Range Planning Subcommittee recently pointed out that work should begin now on accumulating the kinds of statistical information needed to serve initially as an objective and reliable

description of the status quo, and then as a basis for ordering priorities and advancing logically and efficiently toward the evaluation objectives set out in Planning for the 1980s in the General College

For example, preparing a self-study means that we need to collect, collate, and summarize currently available information about...

- characteristics of the present student body
- characteristics of the faculty as a whole: rank, degrees; age; field of concentration; comparisons 1970-1975-1981; need for in-service training or re-orientation
- student achievements: numbers from the beginning of those who drop out, earn certificates, transfer, take the A.A., take a baccalaureate; comparisons with national community college, state university data
- enrollment trends for the past decade in courses individually, programs, divisions
- curriculum developments in the 1960s and 1970s - history of programmatic development, experiments, exports, collection of available evaluations
- survey of recent General College contributions to programs offered by other units of the University
- survey of General College relations with and contribution to other post-secondary institutions and elsewhere, such as vocational-technical institutes, community colleges, and state universities
- bibliography of M.A. and Ph.D. theses based upon studies of General College students, curriculum, administration, student personnel services, etc., 1960 to present
- bibliography of articles about General College appearing in national journals from 1960 to present
- list of reports of General College works and ways made to national conventions of professional organizations

We are fortunate that some of this information already is being collected by Professor Henry Borow with research assistance from Bruce Hixson.

As we confront the task of evaluating General College, we would do well to remember these words from the National Association of Colleges and Universities:

> ...it is imperative that an institution, if it is to retain its vitality and relevance, be constantly alert to the possible modification of goals, clientele served, programs offered, educational methods employed, and modes of support. Such continuing self-analysis may result in a sharper institutional focus and consequent reduction in size and scope of service. No institution can, nor should it attempt to be, all things to all persons. No institution can serve well all those who request its services.
> -NCACSS, Handbook on Accreditation, p. 70.

. . .

Concluding note: The Department of Independent Study announces that certain General College courses will be offered by means of a variety of media during 1980-1981:

GC 1223	Minnesota History to 1900 (video cassette course)	4 credits	Norman Moen
GC 1236	U.S. Crime Problems: Crime & Justice in America (newspaper course converted to correspondence format)	4 credits	Forrest Harris
GC 1357	The Long Search: A Study of Religions	4 credits	Candido Zanoni
GC 1363	Literature for Children (to be broadcast Fall 1980 on KUOM Radio)	4 credits	Terence Collins
GC 1613	Dignity: A Human Right (to be broadcast Fall 1980 on KUOM Radio)	4 credits	Miriam Karlins
GC 1722	Parent-Child Relationships (audio cassette course)	4 credits	Sander Latts
GC 1731	Consumer Problems: Personal Finance (audio cassette course)	4 credits	Barbara Killen
GC 3238	Power and the Individual	4 credits	Dorothy Dodge Patricia Kane
GC 3355	Applied Moral Philosophy: Moral Choices in Contemporary Society (newspaper course converted to correspondence format)	4 credits	Candido Zanoni

Candidates for General College Degrees: 1979-1980

Commencement	A.A.	B.A.S.	B.G.S.	Total
July, 1979	17	5	4	26
August, 1979	17	6	3	26
December, 1979	73	15	6	94
March, 1980	46	8	10	64
June, 1980	40	30	15	85
Totals	193	64	38	295

Student Residence Other Than U.S.A.:

Nigeria: Okitipupa, Ondo, Ewohini, Anambra, Enugu, Ngbo, Adu, Arogbo

Karadji, Iran

Niata, Greece

Bankok, Thailand

Taipei, Taiwan

Aboke-Lira, Uganda

During the 1979-1980 academic year just ending (and subject to completion of requirements by June candidates) the entire University of Minnesota awarded 11,731 academic degrees.